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SENATE MEMORIAL 84

49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009

INTRODUCED BY

Stephen H. Fischmann

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION, THE HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE RIGOR AND RELEVANCE OF THE REQUIRED MATHEMATICS CURRICULUM FOR STUDENTS PREPARING FOR A CAREER AS AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER.

WHEREAS, although student achievement has been improving, as evidenced by the results of both the New Mexico standards-based assessment and the national assessment of education progress, it is still below what is necessary to prepare students to satisfy mathematics requirements for graduation from high school; and

WHEREAS, the 2008 national mathematics advisory panel report concludes that "it is clear that teachers' knowledge of

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1 mathematics is positively related to student achievement"; and

2 WHEREAS, this report recommends that "teachers must know,
3 in detail and from a more advanced perspective, the
4 mathematical content they are responsible for teaching"; and

5 WHEREAS, parents and educators have expressed concern that
6 some elementary school teachers are in need of a deeper
7 understanding of mathematics and greater skill in teaching
8 mathematics; and

9 WHEREAS, the conference board of the mathematical sciences
10 recommends that prospective elementary school teachers be
11 required to take at least nine collegiate hours of credit in
12 mathematics; and

13 WHEREAS, in 2005, the participants in the New Mexico first
14 partnership for mathematics and science town hall recommended
15 that colleges and universities in New Mexico increase the rigor
16 of mathematics and science requirements for teachers;

17 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
18 OF NEW MEXICO that the office of education accountability in
19 the department of finance and administration, the higher
20 education department and the public education department be
21 requested to convene a task force to study the rigor and
22 relevance of the required mathematics curriculum for students
23 preparing for a career as an elementary school teacher; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force collaborate
25 with all colleges and universities in the state that prepare

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1 prospective elementary school teachers to identify whether a
2 standard level of mathematics proficiency is required of all
3 candidates prior to admission into a degree program leading to
4 a credential in elementary education; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force develop a list
6 of required mathematics courses in those schools and
7 universities and a description of how each course addresses
8 essential competencies as contained in the public education
9 department's content standards and benchmarks for mathematics;
10 and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study address whether
12 teachers who have completed nine credit hours of mathematics
13 are better prepared as elementary school teachers than those
14 with the current state requirement, which is six credit hours
15 of mathematics; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force present the
17 findings and recommendations of the study to the legislative
18 education study committee by December 2009; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
20 transmitted to the director of the office of education
21 accountability in the department of finance and administration,
22 the secretary of higher education and the secretary of public
23 education.